AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:

a communication unit for communicating with another image processing apparatuses, wherein when it is judged that the image data is not to be maintained, said maintenance judgment means causes said communication unit to transfer the image data to the another image processing apparatuses.

4. (Currently amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 3,

wherein said maintenance judgment means attaches information for identifying an image processing apparatus, which is an origin of the image data, and the information for identifying the another image processing apparatuses, which is a destination of the image data, to the image data as a transference history of the image data when the image data is to be transferred.

5. (Previously amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further

comprising:

appending information attaching means for attaching the appending information to the

image data.

6. (Previously amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further

comprising:

composite means for composing the image data with the other image data based on the

correlativity information.

7. (Previously amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12,

wherein said appending information generating means generates information indicating

contents of the image data as the appending information by analyzing the image.

8. (Previously amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12,

wherein said appending information generating means generates processing conditions

for processing the image data as the appending information by analyzing the image.

9. (Previously amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further

comprising:

selection means for selecting the other image data, which is to be used for judgment of

the correlativity, using at least a part of the appending information.

10. (Currently amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said selection means repeats to select the a plurality of the other image data until

a predetermined number of the other image data are selected.

11. (Currently amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said correlativity judgment means further judges whether the correlativity

between the selected other image data and the image data is higher than a predetermined value,

and

said selection means repeats to select the a plurality of the other image data until the other

image data, of which the correlativity with the image data is higher than the predetermined value,

are selected more than a predetermined number.

12. (Currently amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:

appending information generating means for generating appending information based on

contents of an image data when the image data is received;

a data storage unit for storing an other image data including the appending information;

correlativity judgment means for judging a correlativity between the image data and the

another image data based on the appending information; and

maintenance judgment means for judging whether the received image data is to be

maintained in the data storage unit based on the correlativity.

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13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) An image processing method, comprising the steps of:

generating appending information based on contents of an image data when the image data is received;

storing in a data storage unit an other image data including the appending information;

judging a correlativity between the image data and the another image data based on the appending information; and

judging whether the received image data is to be maintained in the data storage unit based on the correlativity.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium storing thereon a program for causing a computer to function by:

generating appending information based on contents of an image data when the image data is received;

storing in a data storage unit an other image data including the appending information;

judging a correlativity between the received image data and the another image data based on the appending information; and

judging whether the received image data is to be maintained in the data storage unit based on the correlativity.

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17. (Previously presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said selection means repeats to select a plurality of the other image data until a

predetermined number of the other image data are selected;

said maintenance judgment means judges that the received image data is not to be

maintained if only the other image data, of which the correlativity with the received image data

is lower than a predetermined reference value, is received.

18. (Previously presented) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said maintenance judgment means judges that the received image data is not to

be maintained if an average of the correlativity between the received image data and the other

image data is less than an average of the correlativity among the other image data in the data

storage unit.

19. (New)   The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the image

data is received from outside of the image processing apparatus.

20. (New)   The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein the image

data received from outside of the image processing apparatus is through a network.

21. (New)   The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 14, wherein the image

data is received from outside of the image processing apparatus.

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22. (New)   The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the image

data is received from outside of the image processing apparatus.

23. (New)   The image processing method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising

the step of:

communicating with other image processing apparatuses to transfer the image data to the

other image processing apparatuses when it is judged that the image data is not to be maintained.

24. (New)   The computer readable medium as claimed in claim 16, further comprising

the step of:

communicating with other image processing apparatuses to transfer the image data to the

other image processing apparatuses when it is judged that the image data is not to be maintained.

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